

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00787 151335Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----151340Z 010537 /41

O 151305Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6113
INFORUTAOH/AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE 904
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE
USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE
USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATE
WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0787

EXDIS

NAIROBI FOR AMBASSADOR LOW

WHIT HOUSE - BRZEZINSKI

LISBON FOR A. LAKE WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: RH SA US UK
SUBJ: OUR RESPONSE TO RHODESIAN THREAT TO ZAMBIA

REF: STATE 110991 TOSEC 040311

1. I SAW HAWKINS JUST AFTER NOON TODAY, MAY 15, TO PASS TO HIM THE POINTS IN PARA 2 REFTEL ON THE RHODESIAN THREAT TO ZAMBIA.

2. HAWKINS SAID HE WOULD TRANSMIT THE MESSAGE TO SALISBURY IMMEDIATELY AND "GET AN OFFICIAL REPLY." HE COMMENTED
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"THE CART IS BEING PUT BEFORE THE HORSE AGAIN." THE THREAT COMES FROM ZAMBIA. RHODESIA WOULD RESPOND TO AN ATTACK FROM ZAMBIAN SOIL; THERE WOULD BE NO PREEMPTORY STRIKE. I REMINDED HAWKINS THAT SMITH'S COMMUNICATION TO OWEN HAD MENTIONED A PREEMPTORY STRIKE. HAWKINS SAID HE DID NOT RECALL THE MESSAGE PRECISELY, BUT HE VERY MUCH DOUBTED A PREEMPTORY ACTION WOULD BE CONTEMPLATED. HE HAD REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR TO SALISBURY

IN THE STRONGEST TERMS THAT ZAMBIA WAS A "SACRED COW" AND MUST BE LEFT ALONE; HE BELIEVED THE MESSAGE HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY TAKEN TO HEART.

3. HAWKINS SAID THAT THE WAY THE MATTER HAD BEEN PUT TO HIM, WITH THE ONUS EXCLUSIVELY ON RHODESIA "AS ALWAYS," ADDED TO HIS CONCERN ARISING FROM WHAT APPEARED TO BE A BACKING-AWAY BY THE US FROM THE FULL PART OWEN HAD CATEGORICALLY ASSURED SMITH THE US WOULD PLAY IN THE PRESENT INITIATIVE (CAPE TOWN 0751 NOTAL). THIS CONCERN HAD NOW BEEN COMPOUNDED BY A NEWS REPORT THIS MORNING THAT AMBASSADOR STEPHEN LOW HAD BEEN NAMED AS THE US MEMBER OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP BASED IN LUSAKA. HAWKINS SAID, WITH NO REFLECTION ON AMBASSADOR LOW INTENDED, HE FEARED BOTH SMITH AND THE SOUTH AFRICANS, HAVING EXPECTED THE APPOINTMENT OF AN OFFICIAL "ON THE SCHAUFELER LEVEL," WOULD TAKE THIS APPOINTMENT AS ANOTHER SIGN OF RETREAT AND WEAKENING IN THE US STANCE. AMBASSADOR LOW WOULD BE CONSIDERED "IN THE POCKET OF KAUNDA." IN REITERATING TO HAWKINS THE US AGREEMENT WITH THE UK TO BECOME MORE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE RHODESIA INITIATIVE, I SAID, WHILE BEING UNABLE TO CONFIRM THE ACCURACY OF THE NEWS REPORT, AMBASSADOR LOW IS AN EMINENTLY QUALIFIED HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL AS HIS BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE DEMONSTRATED. WITH RESPECT TO THE MATTER I HAD RAISED TODAY, I ASSURED HAWKINS THAT WE HAD ASSERTED AND WOULD CONTINUE TO ASSERT TO ALL PARTIES OUR DEEPEST CONCERN ABOUT THREATS OR ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE FROM ANY SIDE.

4. PURSUANT TO PARA 3 REFTTEL, I WILL FOLLOW UP WITH FOURIE AT 1730 LOCAL TODAY.NELSON
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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